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"Preferential" in the nomenclature used, and while not entire strangers we are still wondering whether their acquaintance is going to prove advantageous.

Its publication by Little, Brown and Company is a guaranty of the best of taste and mechanical skill in the art of book making, and the book meets the guaranty.

V. H. L.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN COUNTIES, TOWNS AND VILLAGES. By John A. Fairlie, Ph. D., University of Michigan. New York: The Century Co., 1906, pp. xii, 289.

The American State Series, edited by Professor W. W. Willoughby of Johns Hopkins University, is completed in this book of Dr. Fairlie's, which treats of non-urban local government. The task of collecting and classifying the numberless details of local administration in all of our forty-five commonwealths is a tremendous undertaking, but the author has accomplished it exceedingly well; the enormous amount of labor represented by this small book can hardly be appreciated by one who is not familiar with the difficulties attending the examination of our vast body of statute law, and the fact that the present mechanism of local government is here so clearly and systematically set forth, is proof that the author has a mastery of his subject based upon both clear thinking and great industry. The only regret one can feel on reading the book is that, within a few years, it will have become out of date and inaccurate because of the undirected and misdirected tinkering which is continually being done by our state legislatures.

The first three chapters of the book are devoted to a swift survey of the historical development of local institutions in England, in the American Colonies, and in the states. The treatment of this subject is necessarily brief, and no attempt is made to discuss, or even to indicate the author's personal opinion of, the various mooted points regarding the origin and early growth of the township, hundred and shire. In the following section of the work, devoted to the structure and functions of the county, Dr. Fairlie has departed from the traditional method of treating the subject, and does not classify these states into geographical divisions. As applied to the study of existing institutions, this expedient is certainly an improvement from the standpoint of convenience and gives to the discussion of the subject the advantage of totality; on the other hand, the division of the states into geographical groups (which are geographical only incidentally, and are really based on a likeness in institutions, caused by the fact that the settlers from the Atlantic coast went generally straight west and took their governmental institutions with them), might be of greater advantage in the treatment of the subject from an historical point of view. It can hardly be denied that the typical forms of local organization which existed in the various parts of the seaboard states were generally reproduced, with some variations of detail, in the western country as it was settled by immigrants from the east, and it is likewise true that the general course of emigration was along east and west lines. Naturally the same differences in structure which existed between the different divisions of the original states were repeated in the new communities as they grew up, and these differences naturally led students of the subject to adopt

a classification which happened to be more or less geographical. Because of the extensive changes that have been made in all of the states, however, this classification is now less accurate, as applied to present conditions, than it was when used as a method of studying the historical development of institutions, and the author's treatment of this subject is clearer and less complicated than it would have been if he had followed the old method of classification. It is noticeable that in this portion of the work the author has discussed not only the county board—which is perhaps the most prominent feature of the county government—but also the other officers of the county, such as sheriffs, coroners, county judges, prosecuting attorneys, clerks, auditors, recorders, treasurers and school superintendents. The reviewer is not familiar with any other work in which these offices have received any adequate notice, and this feature of Dr. Fairlie's book is simply another evidence of the completeness and thoroughness of his treatment of the whole subject. Indeed, it may be said that one seeking information as to any feature of local government (outside of municipalities), in any of our states, will find it stated or discussed here, both with reference to the particular state, and also with reference to, and in comparison with, the provisions which exist in other states.

The minor divisions within the county—townships, districts or precincts, as they are variously called, and villages, boroughs and school districts,—are discussed in the third part of the book, in which the author is more inclined to return to what he calls in his preface "the traditional method of treatment" which emphasizes the likeness of institutions in parts of the country which drew their blood from particular parts of the seaboard states. The effect of immigration from a particular district is especially noted on page 173, where the absence of the township deliberative assembly in the southern tier of the Central States is attributed to the fact that these states were not settled by New Englanders.

Part Four, dealing with state supervision of various activities of local governmental bodies, is, from many points of view, the most interesting portion of the book. State control over education, sanitation, charities, taxation and finance, though almost universal, is still in a developmental stage and the subject has all the interest which comes from the first-hand study of the cause and effect of present tendencies. Especially are the matters discussed in the last chapter—state control of roads, of accounting systems and of the constabulary,—of great interest from this point of view. As the author says (p. 271) "All of these illustrate the tendency towards "central state administration as contrasted with the earlier decentralizing "policy, and this development is steadily changing the balance between state "and local government. The continuous expansion in the field of national "administration makes a still further growth in the same direction." And it is easy to see that the author is quite in accord with the present day tendency toward central administrative supervision over local authorities.

E. H.